

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 15, 2011

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

As you begin discussions in the United Nations Security Council, we believe that it is important to address human rights concerns in the Polisario camps near Tindouf, Algeria in a manner that addresses the legitimate rights of the population and also sustains the real human rights progress in the Kingdom of Morocco. As you know, King Mohammed VI has already launched an initiative that will greatly enhance the status of human rights protections in that country, particularly in the Western Sahara; it is a significant step that deserves our support.

Morocco's constant commitment to Human Rights protection has ushered in the establishment by King Mohamed VI of a new and wholly independent human rights institution, the National Council for Human Rights (CNDH), which is exactly the kind of forward-looking steps we all expect from Morocco. We believe this initiative provides the basis for achieving real monitoring and respect for human rights within the context of the National Council. The broad powers delegated to this organization along with the strengthening of the role of the institution of the "Mediator" and the appointment of an "Inter-Ministerial Delegate for Human Rights", as well as the proposed reforms to the constitution, will result in a truly unique and vital contribution to human rights protection in the region.

Human rights leaders in Morocco have praised the creation of the new council, noting that, "the new initiative is a clear sign of the genuine political desire to firmly entrench democracy and human rights." These steps: the creation of the National Council for Human Rights and its related institutions, enshrining human rights protections in the new constitutional revisions coupled with the enhanced reporting mechanisms with international human rights organizations, and Morocco's continued commitment to open access regarding human rights issues, indicate the serious and credible approach that Morocco has adopted.

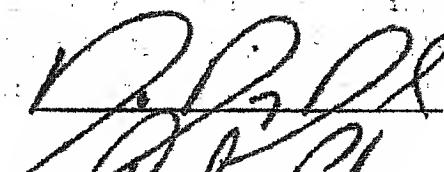
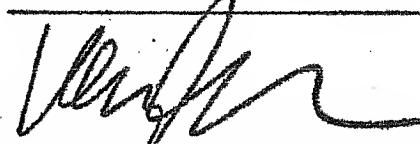
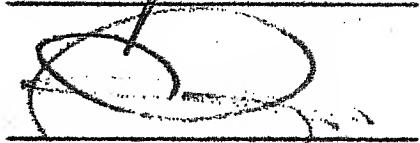
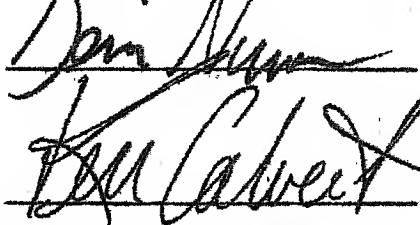
We urge you to continue to strengthen and broaden our relationship with Morocco so that human rights protection becomes a reality supported by the people of Morocco and the region and to strongly support the Moroccan approach as the UN Security Council discusses this matter.

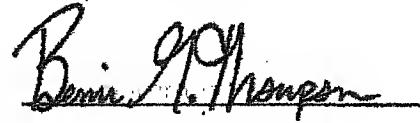
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We are also pleased that your recent statements have once again reaffirmed the longstanding American policy, supported by bipartisan majority in both the US House and US Senate, toward resolving the dispute over the Western Sahara based on the formula of autonomy under Sahrawi sovereignty. Now is the time for the US Government to transform our stated policy into actions that provide visible and concrete evidence of the US commitment to this solution. We look forward to working with you towards the success of this policy.

Sincerely,


Cindy Abas

Mark

Don

Bill Calvert

T. McElrath (MI-10)

Brian J.P. Thompson

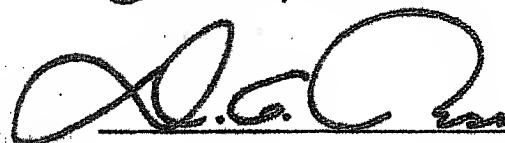
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Chay Boggay 5-2-15


T. Holan


Bob Fink


D.C. Lee FC-12


Edna


Muhal H. Muhammad


Ghulifatullah

Steven Nathan

CONTACT:

Calvin Dark

202.587.0855

cdark@moroccanamericancenter.com**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Monday, April 25, 2011**

Ambassadors from Four US Administrations Urge Sec. Clinton to Maintain Support for Morocco's Democratic Reforms and Compromise Plan to End the Western Sahara Conflict

Washington, DC (April 25)— Last week, eight former US Ambassadors to Morocco called on Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton to continue US support of Morocco's ongoing, wide-ranging reforms to achieve "true democracy," "enhancement of civil and human rights," and to find real "solutions to social and economic issues, including corruption." At this critical time for the region and the world, the former Ambassadors, from the Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Clinton and George W. Bush Administrations, echoed Sec. Clinton's recent praise of His Majesty King Mohammed VI who "has long demonstrated his commitment to reform," and emphasized that Morocco's "democratic path [...] will also benefit US policy."

"While we encompass different political viewpoints [...], we are all concerned, as you are, with the future of US-Moroccan relations at this particularly dramatic moment in the history of North Africa," wrote the group in a letter to Sec. Clinton. "Your continued encouragement and our national leadership will be decisive on the issue of political and social reform not only in Morocco but in other parts of the Middle East and North Africa."

The former ambassadors also called for a resolution to the Western Sahara conflict, which will "create another area of peace in a suffering world." Their call echoes the current Obama Administration position that "Morocco's autonomy plan is serious, realistic, and credible – a potential approach to satisfy the aspirations of the people in the Western Sahara to run their own affairs in peace and dignity." The former ambassadors also join bipartisan majorities of both the US House and Senate who have declared that "[US] leadership can make a significant difference" and that "favoring autonomy for Western Sahara under Moroccan sovereignty is the only feasible solution."

While current US policy supports autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty, as reaffirmed by Sec. Clinton on numerous occasions "[s]tarting with the Clinton Administration and continuing through the Bush Administration and up to the present in the Obama Administration," it must be supported by concrete, unambiguous actions. Former Ambassador Michael Ussery, who has recently returned from a visit to Morocco and the Sahara said that "Lifting the restrictions on extending US aid and economic development programs to the Western Sahara, and permitting high-level US officials, including the current US Ambassador, to travel to the Sahara, would demonstrate US commitment to peacefully ending the Western Sahara conflict and promoting stability in the region."

**** For full text of the letter, please visit:
[http://www.moroccanamericanpolicy.org/Frmr_Amb_Ltr_041911.pdf]**

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The Moroccan American Center for Policy (MACP) is a non-profit organization whose principal mission is to inform opinion makers, government officials and interested publics in the United States about political and social developments in Morocco and the role being played by the Kingdom of Morocco in broader strategic developments in North Africa, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East. For more, please visit www.moroccanamericanpolicy.org

This material is distributed by the Moroccan American Center for Policy on behalf of the Government of Morocco. Additional information is available at the Department of Justice in Washington, DC.

FORMER US AMBASSADORS TO MOROCCO

April 19, 2011

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Madam Secretary:

By way of introduction, we are former US ambassadors to Morocco – “former” rather than “retired” because we all stay in touch with developments in that country where we proudly represented our own. While we encompass different political viewpoints and ways of life, we are all concerned, as you are, with the future of US-Moroccan relations at this particularly dramatic moment in the history of North Africa.

We want to applaud your recent public statement after you met with the Moroccan Foreign Minister in Washington and your commitment to “further deepening our strong and strategic partnership.” Your March 23 press conference unambiguously aligned the United States with the aspects of Moroccan policy which deserve to be supported: further strides toward true democracy including reform of the parliamentary, administering and judicial elements of the government; enhancement of civil and human rights; and solutions to social and economic issues, including corruption, that concern the population. Significantly, you praised Morocco for being ready to lead the way in the Middle East concerning social, political and economic reforms. We also commend your praise of King Mohammed VI’s historic speech of March 9th, in which he laid down timelines and a consultative process that decisively commits Morocco to accelerating these reforms. He thus acknowledged the legitimacy of young job seekers and other aspirants for improvements in living standards, and aligned himself with concerns expressed by the average Moroccan in the streets – a commendable exception to the way most leaders have reacted in the region.

This democratic path, from which the King has made clear that there is no turning back, will also benefit US policy. Your continued encouragement and our national leadership will be decisive on the issue of political and social reform not only in Morocco but in other parts of the Middle East and North Africa.

As for regional concerns, we also welcome your emphasis on addressing divisive issues that have too long envenomed neighborly relations and prevented regional integration. Regarding the Western Sahara, you justly underlined the longstanding US position that Morocco’s autonomy plan is “serious, realistic, and credible.” This Moroccan initiative is designed

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to become the instrument by which the United Nations can, as you said, "satisfy the aspirations of the people in the Western Sahara to run their own affairs in peace and dignity." Resolving this conflict will also create another area of peace in a suffering world.

We believe that these matters with which you are dealing are of urgent concern and we trust they shall not be neglected as the US focuses on one global issue after another. Morocco, our earliest ally, has taken a stand next to the US at strategic moments, most recently at the time of the convening of the allied group in Paris concerning the Libyan situation.

We decisively support and applaud the policy objectives you are pursuing with Morocco, which demonstrate our leadership role around the world.

Sincerely,



Joseph Verner Reed, Jr.
Former United States Ambassador to Morocco



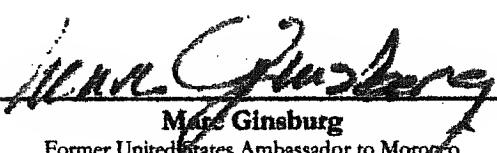
Thomas Nassif
Former United States Ambassador to Morocco



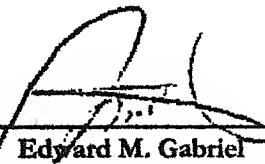
Michael Ussery
Former United States Ambassador to Morocco



Frederick Vreeland
Former United States Ambassador to Morocco



Marc Ginsburg
Former United States Ambassador to Morocco



Edward M. Gabriel
Former United States Ambassador to Morocco



Margaret D. Tutwiler
Former United States Ambassador to Morocco



Thomas Riley
Former United States Ambassador to Morocco

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Monday, April 11, 2011

As Libyan Opposition Rejects AU Plan Leaving Qaddafi in Power, Rebels Reportedly Capture Algerian Mercenaries, Accuse Algeria of 'Turning Blind Eye' to Hired Guns Crossing Border to Support Qaddafi

Washington DC (April 11) – As Libyan opposition leaders today rejected a peace proposal by the African Union that fails to include removal of Moammar Qaddafi, Agence France Press (AFP) is reporting that the Libyan rebels have captured 15 mercenaries from Algeria and rebel leaders are accusing Algeria of failing to prevent mercenaries from crossing into Libya to help the Qaddafi regime cling to power.

According to AFP, Libyan rebels said Sunday they had captured 15 mercenaries who identified themselves as Algerians. Rebel leaders said they also captured a local supporter of the Qaddafi regime, who was serving as guide to the mercenaries, during a battle in the eastern Libya town of Ajdabiya.

Commenting on the capture, rebel spokesperson Shamsiddin Abdulmolah accused Algeria—one of only two Arab League countries to vote against the international coalition effort to protect Libyan civilians—of backing Qaddafi and “turning a blind eye” to mercenaries crossing the border to help Qaddafi quash the rebellion. “It’s sad,” he told AFP, “the same kind of dictatorship we have here, they have over there” in Algeria.

Algeria put out a statement to AFP Sunday “categorically” denying any involvement in “this alleged mercenary operation.”

“The Libyan rebels need more than denials from neighboring countries of complicity in helping Qaddafi bring in these mercenaries to suppress his own people—they need it to stop,” said Robert M. Holley, Executive Director, Moroccan American Center for Policy. “Continued evidence that the fight for democracy in Libya is being undermined by outside marauders for hire should be of great concern to the international community. It is difficult enough for the rebels to fight off Qaddafi’s regular army, even with the UN-sanctioned no-fly zone in place. Algeria needs to make a serious, concerted effort to ensure that its citizens are not crossing the border as paid thugs to support one of the most brutal dictators in the world.”

Morocco continues to provide humanitarian assistance to support the Libyan people’s efforts to achieve greater democracy. It was a key supporter in the 20-2 Arab League vote in favor of an internationally sanctioned no-fly zone over Libya to protect civilians from being slaughtered by Qaddafi’s military forces.

* For an English version of the AFP story, via News24, go to: <http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/15-Algerian-mercenaries-seized-in-Libya-20110410>

* For the French version of the AFP story, go to: <http://www.algerie360.com/algerie/les-rebelles-libyens-disent-detenir-15-mercenaires-algeriens-et-en-avoir-tue-trois/>

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